

resumed cargo operations. The ship got underway on 8 July, shaped a course for the Marshalls, and during the next month delivered cargo to both Eniwetok and Kwajalein. *Auriga* was then routed to Espiritu Santo to pick up more cargo.

Upon reaching Espiritu Santo on 15 August, the ship received word of the Japanese capitulation. She loaded supplies and equipment, got underway for Guam on the 23d, and entered Apra Harbor on 1 September. There, she took on cargo to support occupation forces in Japan. After a brief stop at Iwo Jima, *Auriga* sailed to Japan.

The vessel reached Yokosuka on 12 October and began discharging supplies ashore. She later embarked Army and Navy personnel for transportation back to the United States. The ship left Japan on 27 November and proceeded to Pearl Harbor. She then sailed on to the Panama Canal Zone, transited the canal on 27 December, and continued on to the east coast of the United States. *Auriga* reached New York City on 3 January 1946; discharged her passengers, cargo, and ammunition; and began preparations for deactivation. She was decommissioned at the New York Naval Shipyard on 22 January 1946 and was returned to the Maritime Commission for disposal. Her name was struck from the Navy list on 7 February 1946. She was sold later that year and was refitted for merchant service.

Auriga earned five battle stars for her World War II service.

Aurora

The Roman goddess of the morning often depicted in art as rising from the ocean in a chariot. Also a luminous phenomenon that consists of streamers or arches of light in the sky at night. The auroras are believed to be of electrical origin and are best observed in Arctic and Antarctic regions.

(Tug: t. 234; l. 110'0"; b. 26'8"; s. 12 k.; cpl. 20; a. 1 1-pdr.)

Aurora (SP-345)—a tug built in 1906 at Camden, N.J., by John H. Dialogue—was chartered by the Navy from the Lehigh Valley Railroad on 9 August 1917 and commissioned at Port Richmond, N.Y., on 22 September 1917. She was assigned to the 3d Naval District for duty as a minesweeper. She operated in that capacity out of Port Richmond until December 1918. At that time, *Aurora* was transferred to the Naval Overseas Transportation Service (NOTS) which used her as a tug at Tompkinsville, N.Y. On 24 March 1919, NOTS officials placed her out of commission and returned her to her owner. Her name was struck from the Navy list that same day.

Aurore II

(Yacht: t. 85; l. 96'3"; b. 18'0"; dr. 5'0" (mean); s. 12 k.; cpl. 16; a. 1 3-pdr., 1 1-pdr., 3 mg.)

Aurore II—a twin-screw, wooden-hulled, steam yacht built at Stamford, Conn., in 1916 by the Luders Marine Construction Co.—was purchased by the Navy from Stuart Wyeth of Philadelphia and placed in commission at the Philadelphia Navy Yard on 1 October 1917.

The yacht served in the 3d Naval District through the end of World War I and into the summer of 1919. She functioned as a patrol and dispatch boat in the Delaware estuary and in coastal waters near the Delaware capes. She also carried passengers in the same area.

Decommissioned on 12 August 1919, *Aurore II* was sold on 24 September 1919 to Mr. J. A. Branden of New York City.

Ausable

A river and a town in Clinton County, New York. Also a French word meaning "sandy."

(ScStr: dp. 7,500; l. 327'3"; b. 21'6" (mean); s. 10 k. (max.); cpl. 61; a. 2 3")

Laura—a steel-hulled screw steamer built in 1901 by Jan Smit, shipbuilder, of Ablasserdam, Holland, initially voyaged under the Dutch flag for well over a decade and a half before her name was changed to *Ausable* sometime in 1916 or 1917, probably

when she was acquired by the American Transatlantic Co., Inc. After the United States entered World War I, with the arming of American merchant ships, the vessel apparently received a battery of two 3-inch guns, manned by a Navy armed guard crew.

On 2 February 1918, the United States Shipping Board turned her over to the War Department, for use as a cargo transport. Later that same year, on 19 July, Vice Admiral William S. Sims, commanding United States Naval Forces in European waters, was authorized to assume custody of *Ausable* on a bare-ship basis, manning her with a Navy crew and operating her for the Army.

Accordingly, on 1 October 1918, *Ausable*—assigned to the Naval Overseas Transportation Service (NOTS) and designated Id. No. 1631—was commissioned at Cardiff, Wales, Lt. Comdr. Charles L. Arey, in command. At commissioning, her armed guard complement became "ship's company," and other Navymen soon supplanted her civilian crew to operate the ship. These changes completed, the ship began loading a cargo of coal the following evening.

Her bunkers and holds full by the morning of 6 October, *Ausable* embarked 16 American soldiers for passage to France before shifting to nearby Avonmouth to load a deck cargo of tractors. She departed the British Isles the following day, anchoring in Brest Roads, off the port of Brest, France, four days later. She then travelled in coastwise convoys to Quiberon Bay and La Pallice before reaching Bayonne on the 19th. There, she unloaded the tractors before steaming to Boucau, a port on the right bank of the Adour River, northwest of Bayonne and near the river's mouth at the Bay of Biscay, to unload her coal. On 11 November, Armistice Day, she got underway to return to the British Isles, making port at Barry, southwest of Cardiff, three days later, to unload her cargo.

Underway for Belfast, Ireland, on 23 November, *Ausable* reached that port two days later, loading coal for transportation across the English Channel. Underway again on the 28th, she headed for France. En route, *Ausable* sighted the steamer *Kilburne* drifting, her engines apparently out of commission. Comdr. Arey agreed to tow the ship to Fishguard, a port on the north coast of Wales just off the Irish Sea; and *Ausable* passed a towline to the distressed ship while sending a wireless message to Fishguard, requesting authorities there to have a tug available to bring *Kilburne* into port. Proceeding through the choppy sea, the collier towed the British steamer to Fishguard and briefly lay-to until the requested tug arrived to pick up the tow. Her mission of mercy completed, *Ausable* rang down full speed and proceeded for Bordeaux to deliver her cargo of coal.

Reaching Bordeaux via Verdon-sur-Mer on 6 December, *Ausable* completed discharging her cargo by the 12th and, two days later, embarked the officers and men from the cargo ship *Lake Bloomington*—which had run aground on the 11th and had been abandoned as a total loss—for transportation to England. Other transportation was apparently provided, however, for these same men—52 all told—disembarked before *Ausable* left Bordeaux.

Ausable arrived back in British waters four days before Christmas, dropping anchor in Barry Roads. The ship conducted one additional coal-carrying voyage to French waters—to the port of St. Nazaire, via Quiberon Bay—before departing St. Nazaire with 1,355 tons of general cargo (that included 10 tons of ammunition) on 15 February, bound for the United States.

Ausable steamed past the Ambrose Lightship on 12 March, anchoring in Gravesend Bay that evening. She unloaded her ammunition cargo into a barge on the afternoon of the 13th. Two days later, she shifted to an anchorage off Staten Island, tarrying there briefly before mooring to a dock at New York City on the 16th to discharge the remainder of her cargo. That task completed, she moved to Shewan's Drydocks, Brooklyn, and subsequently to the Erie Docks (also Brooklyn) where her guns were removed. Finally, on the afternoon of 19 April 1919, *Ausable* was placed out of commission and simultaneously returned to her former owners.

Ausable operated with the American Transatlantic Co. until 1924, when she was sold to the Foreign Transport and Mercantile Corp., also of New York. Renamed *Matte Jensen* in 1924 or 1925, the steamer served under Danish registry into the late 1920's. Subsequently acquired by an A. Kalnin, of Riga, Latvia, the erstwhile NOTS coal carrier became *Kuhrs* in 1929 or 1930, and sailed under the Latvian flag until acquired by the Cumbrae Shipping Co. Ltd., an English firm, in 1936 or 1937.

She disappeared from shipping registries during the 1937-1938 period.

Ausburn

Ausburn (Destroyer No. 294) was renamed *Charles Ausburn* (q.v.) on 20 February 1920.

Ausburne

Ausburne (Destroyer No. 294) was renamed *Ausburn* (q.v.) on 12 December 1919 to correct an apparent spelling error.

Ausburne, Charles, see *Charles Ausburne* (DD-570).

Austin

Stephen Fuller Austin was born on 3 November 1793 on the southwestern frontier of Virginia in what is now Wythe County. In 1798, his family moved to what is now Missouri. At the completion of studies at Transylvania University in April 1810, he returned to that area to begin what would be a widely varied career. He worked as a storekeeper, managed some of the local lead mines, and served as the director of the Bank of St. Louis. Concurrently, Austin was also a militia officer and a member of the Missouri territorial legislature. However, by 1820, the Austin family had fallen on hard times, and Stephen moved on to Arkansas in June of that year. Appointed a judge by the governor, he appears never to have served on the bench. Instead, he moved south to New Orleans to study law. While there, he also assisted in the editorial department of the *Louisiana Advertiser*.

While in New Orleans, Austin succumbed to his father's enthusiastic interest in settling Americans in the Mexican province of Texas. Visiting the area in 1821, he secured the governor's consent to settle the 300 families in Texas for which his father's grant called. In addition, he selected a fertile, well-watered site on the Gulf of Mexico for the colony and, in January 1822, supervised the establishment of the colony there. In the meantime, Mexico had successfully concluded her 11-year struggle for independence from Spain. That event, coupled with the Spanish origin of Moses Austin's original land grant, caused some doubt about the continued validity of the enterprise.

Stephen Austin, therefore, travelled to Mexico City to gain the approval of the new government. Political instability in the capital kept him there for about a year, but he returned not only with an official sanction but also with valuable experience and knowledge in negotiating with Latin officialdom, not to mention some powerful friends.

Upon his return, he brought with him a broad range of power. In a sense, he may be viewed as absolute dictator of Texas until 1828, combining in his person the roles of executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government as well as military head. He possessed the final authority to admit people to or exclude them from his grant.

Though much of this authority lapsed after the 1828 organization of a constitutional government for Texas, his influence continued to dominate the scene for several years thereafter. He served as a member of the legislature of Coahuila-Texas in 1831 and 1832 and was elected to the term beginning in 1835. However, events which led to the independence of Texas prevented him from serving that term.

A convention assembled in April 1833 requested of the Mexican government that Texas be separated from Coahuila and be granted the status of a state within the Mexican federation. Austin—using his knowledge of the Mexican psyche—opposed the method and timing, though he favored the objective. Nevertheless, he carried out the wishes of the convention by delivering its petition to Mexico City. Once the course was determined, he pressed the Texan case vigorously—perhaps too vigorously. For his pains, he was arrested on the spurious charge that he was really pushing for a Texan revolution with the object of appending Texas to the United States. As a result, he spent a year in prison and another six months of detention under bond.

A general amnesty law in July 1835 finally allowed him to return to Texas. Upon his arrival there, he found the people on

the threshold of revolt. A convention of Texans was scheduled for November 1835 to formulate a policy toward Santa Ana's changes to the federal constitution of 1824, but war erupted before the convention met. Thus the focus of their discussions quickly changed to defining the goals for which the Texans were fighting. Austin supported the successful moderate resolution which called for Texas autonomy, but still within the context of the federal constitution of 1824. Initially, therefore, the Texans fought only the centralist concept.

Yet, since they were fighting the central government—regardless of objective—the people of Texas needed assistance. Accordingly, a three-man commission—composed of William H. Wharton, Branch T. Archer, and Austin—was appointed to travel to the United States to seek loans and other assistance. The commissioners arrived in New Orleans in January 1836 and secured loans totalling about a quarter of a million dollars. Their trip up the Mississippi River generated a great deal of sympathy for their cause and no doubt contributed to the subsequent, large influx of Americans into Texas.

Nevertheless, in the United States, support for the Texans remained private rather than public. Despite the excellent connections of the three commissioners, the Jackson Administration avoided any hint of official support. While the three men were still in Washington, Texas declared its independence on 2 March 1836. Those two facts dictated their return to Texas to help establish the government of the new republic. Austin arrived back in Texas in June of 1836 and, supported by his two former colleagues in the United States, ran for the presidency of the republic. He lost to Sam Houston in the September election but, the following month, accepted the post of secretary of state in Houston's cabinet and served in that post until his death on 27 December 1836.

Austin is also the name of the city that serves as the capital of Texas and the seat of government for Travis County. Named in honor of Stephen Fuller Austin, the founder of Texas, it is located in central Texas on the Colorado River about 75 miles northeast of San Antonio.

John Arnold Austin—born in Warrior, Ala., on 30 August 1905—enlisted in the Navy on 20 November 1920. Between that time and 26 July 1935, he served four successive enlistments. On the latter day, Austin accepted an acting appointment as carpenter (warrant officer grade). That same day, he reported on board *Canopus* (AS-9) then serving as a unit of the Asiatic Fleet. On 8 August, he detached from temporary duty in the submarine tender and reported for duty in *Augusta* (CA-31). On 4 December 1935, Austin received a permanent warrant as a carpenter. He left the heavy cruiser on 13 July 1937 and reported on board *Tennessee* (BB-43) on 10 September 1937. He served in that battleship until detached on 14 June 1939 to proceed to further assignment to *Rigel* (AD-13) reporting on 18 July 1939. After 14 months in that destroyer tender, Carpenter Austin departed on 21 September 1940 bound for duty in *Oklahoma* (BB-37) and reported on board the battleship on 5 October 1940. In October 1941, Austin received a commission as chief carpenter (commissioned warrant officer).

When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on the morning of 7 December 1941, Chief Carpenter Austin was in *Oklahoma*. When the battleship capsized as a result of Japanese bombs and torpedoes, he was trapped below water with many of his shipmates. Austin searched for a means of escape and found a porthole which, though beneath the surface, offered just such an avenue. As a result of his efforts, 15 sailors escaped a watery grave. Chief Carpenter Austin, however, did not. As his citation reads, "He gallantly gave his life in the service of his country." Chief Carpenter Austin was awarded the Navy Cross posthumously.

The first *Austin*—originally a ship of the Texas Navy—was named in honor of Stephen Fuller Austin. The second *Austin* (DE-15) honored Chief Carpenter John Arnold Austin. The third *Austin* (LPD-4) was named for the capital of Texas.

I

(SlpW: t. 600; l. 125'; b. 31'; dph. 12'6"; cpl. 174; a. 16 24-pdrs., 4 18 pdrs.)

The first *Austin*—a sloop of war constructed in 1839 at Baltimore, Md., by Schott & Whitney for the Texas Navy under the name *Texas*—was delivered and commissioned on 5 January

1840 at Galveston, Republic of Texas, Capt. Edwin W. Moore, TN, in command though not present.

Austin remained at Galveston through the first five months of 1840 recruiting officers and men and training them in the ways of the sea before embarking upon her first cruise late in June. She and the rest of the squadron stopped at New Orleans, La., for about a month to gather stores and provisions. Late in July, she set sail in company with *San Bernard* bound for the Yucatan peninsula where another revolt had broken out against the central government in Mexico City. She arrived at Sisal on the northern coast of Yucatan on 31 July but soon moved southwest down the coast to Campeche where Commodore Moore conferred with two leaders of the Yucatan federalist movement, General Anaya and governor-elect Santiago Mendez, regarding joint Texas-Yucatan action against the central government. The two men offered Moore the use of Yucatan ports for operations against Mexico. The Texas squadron, however, was under orders not to begin hostilities unless and until the negotiations between Texas commissioner James Treat and the Mexican government failed completely. Thus *Austin* spent her time cruising around the gulf coast of Mexico and Yucatan gathering intelligence and investigating ports and suitable anchorages.

Those inconclusive meanderings ended on 1 October when a severe gale blew up while *Austin* was off Lobos Island. During the third stormy day, her lookouts sighted a ship in distress; and she immediately dispatched boats to aid the stricken vessel which proved to be the Mexican *Segunda Fama*. The Texans succeeded in saving all 26 people on board as well as her cargo. On 14 October, *Austin* departed Lobos Island and set a course for Tampico to land the survivors. She arrived there on the 16th and completed her appointed mission the incongruous result of which was to have her enemies ashore laud her and her crew as heroes. She remained in the area several days in the hope that her newly found hero status might allow her to fill her beleaguered water casks. The honeymoon lasted only four days. On 20 October, a boat from *Austin* attempting to gather fresh water from the river current about one and one-half miles offshore was fired upon by a Mexican shore battery. Though the men of the boat crew suffered only a drenching from the shell splashes and made good their escape back to *Austin*, Commodore Moore concluded that hostilities had recommenced. He fired one token shot from an impossible range and sailed *Austin* away to gather his squadron to promulgate a blockade of the eastern coast of Mexico.

The sloop of war returned to the anchorage at the Arcas Islands to find *San Jacinto* hard aground and severely damaged by a storm. After surveying the stricken ship, Moore sailed in *Austin* to find *San Bernard* and *Zavala*, the other two active ships of his squadron. He visited Campeche on 8 November and Sisal on the 10th. From the latter port, he headed for Frontera where he finally found *Zavala* and *San Bernard* on the 14th. At this point, the Texas squadron desperately needed cash to repair *San Jacinto*, to supply fuel for the steamer *Zavala*, and to provide stores and provisions for the rest of the squadron. Accordingly, discussions were held regarding the Texas squadron's potential utility in helping Yucatan federalist forces in their siege of centralist-held San Juan Bautista located several miles up the Tabasco River. Yucatan General Anaya agreed to pay the Texas Navy \$25,000 of the ransom charged the town if the joint attack succeeded. On 19 November, *Austin* started up the Tabasco in company with *San Bernard* and a Yucatan brig—all being towed by *Zavala*. The warships arrived off San Juan Bautista the following day, and the town's 600-man centralist garrison surrendered without a shot's being fired by either side. *Austin* and the rest of the squadron remained at the town for several days to assure collection of the Texas Navy's entire share of the ransom and then the fever-wracked squadron departed, manned by 30 men among the three ships. The sloop of war stopped at the Arcas Islands on 13 January 1841 to pick up the sick who had been left there to recover and then headed back to Galveston where she arrived on 1 February.

At Galveston, *Austin* was placed in reduced commission, serving only on harbor patrol. She remained there through most of what was left of 1841 before returning to full commission early in December 1841.

During the middle of the first week in December, *Austin* was towed across the Galveston bar to receive stores and provisions in preparation for her second cruise in cooperation with the Yucatan federalists against centralist Mexican forces. On 13 December with Commodore Moore embarked, she set sail for Yucatan. By 5 January 1842, *Austin* had rendezvoused with *San*

Bernard and *San Antonio*, both of which had departed Galveston ahead of her. The three Texas Navy warships entered the port of Sisal on the 6th and remained there until the 24th while Commodore Moore conducted diplomatic discussions with the federalists of Yucatan. On the latter day, she got underway for a humanitarian mission—the rescue of the crew and the salvage of the cargo of the American merchant ship *Sylph* which had been driven hard aground on Alacranes Island during a severe storm. She succeeded in her mission and landed passengers, crew, and cargo back at Sisal, *Sylph*'s destination, on the 27th.

Austin departed Sisal on 1 February 1842 in company with *San Bernard*. After a stop at Campeche, they continued on to Veracruz where they took up station as close to shore as conditions permitted. On 6 February, *Austin* and *San Bernard* sighted, pursued, and captured the 180-ton Mexican brig *Progreso* and sent her to Galveston with two officers and a small prize crew on board. Bad weather plagued the two Texas ships throughout the month of February, and they made no further captures. On 17 February, *Austin* hoisted the United States flag and sailed into Veracruz harbor itself to get a first hand look at Mexican naval preparations. After viewing with alarm an old commercial steamer undergoing naval conversion and a new schooner readying as well, she released her captives in *Progreso*'s boats, exited the harbor, and set sail for Campeche. The warship stopped overnight at Campeche on 22 and 23 February before continuing on to Sisal. From there, she made for the Arcas Islands anchorage to rendezvous with *San Antonio*.

San Antonio failed to make the rendezvous before water and ration shortages forced *Austin* to depart the Arcas Islands on 5 March. The next day, she stopped at Campeche for mail; and some trouble ensued there over a rumor that the Texans had or were about to receive orders to begin operations against Yucatan in consequence of the latter's about-to-be consummated reconciliation with the government in Mexico City. Moore, however, succeeded in disabusing the Yucatan officials of such notions and left Campeche on the 9th in company with *San Bernard*. The two ships arrived in Carmen the next day and met *San Antonio*.

The Texas squadron remained at Carmen for 18 days taking on water and making repairs. On the 28th, the three warships set sail for Veracruz where they arrived on the last day of March. After taunting the two Mexican warships in the harbor to no avail, *Austin* and her cohorts began prosecuting the blockade. On 1 April, *Austin* and *San Bernard* captured the small Mexican schooner *Doloritas* somewhat northwest of Veracruz. Two officers were put on board the schooner which headed for Galveston. On the 3d, they took the schooner *Dos Amigos* near Tuxpan. The three ships then headed for Lobos Island to put a prize crew on board. Upon entering the anchorage on 4 April, *Austin* grounded on a pinnacle reef, but she kedged herself off within two hours. After sending *Dos Amigos* to Galveston in company with *San Bernard*, *Austin* headed for Sisal where she arrived on 18 April. The following day, *San Bernard* arrived off Sisal with orders for Commodore Moore to return to Texas to confer with President Houston. The Texas squadron departed the Yucatan coast on 26 April and shaped a course for Galveston.

Austin and her consorts arrived in Galveston at the beginning of May. On the 7th, they shoved off for various American gulf ports to refit. *Austin* went to New Orleans and remained there for almost a year due to a series of political and financial machinations carried out, for the most part, by the new republic's anti-navy president, Sam Houston. Finally, on the night of 15 April 1843, Commodore Moore put to sea in *Austin* in company with *Wharton*. The two warships shaped course for the coast of Yucatan where hostilities had broken out once again between the largely federalist locals and the central government in Mexico City. Later that month, *Austin* and *Wharton* arrived off the coast of Yucatan and began searching for the much stronger Mexican squadron, now augmented by the iron-hulled steamer *Montezuma* and the wooden-hulled steamer *Guadaloupe* both of which were armed with guns that far outranged those of the Texas ships.

The Texans had hoped to encounter one of those monsters alone so that they might defeat the enemy in detail. That was not to be. They finally encountered the Mexicans—the entire five-ship squadron—between Lerma and Campeche at dawn on 30 April. Notwithstanding the heavy odds against them, the Texas warships pressed on every square inch of sail and charged to the attack. At 7:35 a.m. the Mexican warships opened fire with their long-range guns. *Austin* and *Wharton* passed between the Mexican steamers and their sailing ships. They exchanged five

broadships with the steamers to port before concentrating on the sailing ships to starboard. However, remaining outside the range of the Texan guns, the two steamers used their long-range Paixhans to harass *Austin* and *Wharton* while the Mexican sailing ships took flight. At about 8:40 a.m., the wind died and forced the two Texans to lie to. They eventually dropped anchors and sent their crews to breakfast. Anchored in such a manner as to be able to turn and present their broadsides in any direction without the wind, *Austin* and *Wharton* kept a weather eye on the steamers while looking for signs of a breeze.

At 11:15 a.m. *Montezuma* and *Guadaloupe* reopened the combat by trying to cross the sterns of the Texas and Yucatan ships. However, by virtue of their method of anchoring, *Austin* and *Wharton* were able to turn without the wind and present their starboard batteries. Soon thereafter, a northerly breeze sprang up enabling the two Texans to slip their anchors and make for the Mexicans at best speed. Texans and Mexicans traded broadsides. One 68-pound Paixhans shell from *Guadaloupe* screamed low over *Austin's* quarterdeck forcing Commodore Moore and Lt. Gray to duck as it cut the after mizzenmast shroud, crashed through Moore's cabin and out the stern into the water. Damage, however, remained minimal. The Mexicans soon pulled out of range upwind and moved off. At this point, *Austin* and *Wharton* moved into the anchorage. *Austin* grounded on the way in; but, with the coming of the tide an hour later, she floated free.

While his warships were in the anchorage, Commodore Moore made plans and changes which he hoped would enable him to renew the engagement on somewhat more equal terms. *Austin* received two long-range 18-pounders from the federalists ashore, and *Wharton* took on board a single, long-range 12-pounder. Each morning the two ships sought the opportunity of a good, strong shore breeze to dash through the danger zone created by the Mexicans long-range Paixhans and utilize their superiority in medium-range guns to best advantage. The Mexicans foiled these attempts by the simple expedient of backing out of range upwind.

Under pressure to achieve a victory, the Mexicans finally sought battle. On the morning of 16 May, a strong, offshore breeze allowed the Texans to come out and engage their Mexican enemies. The three Mexicans traded shots with the two Texans until the wind died around 10:00 that morning. At that point, the Mexican steamers began to close the becalmed Texans, pounding them with their long-range guns on the way in. Soon, however, they were inside the range of *Austin's* borrowed long-range 18's. Her second salvo carried away *Guadaloupe's* flagstaff and ensign. Twenty minutes later, *Austin* suffered three hits in rapid succession, but damage remained minimal. Finally, the Mexicans closed to within range of medium guns and the duel began in earnest. Both steamers concentrated their fire on *Austin*. The doughty little sail-powered sloop of war gave as well as she received. Then, suddenly about 20 minutes after noon, a breeze sprang up. While *Wharton* noticed the breeze too late to really take advantage, *Austin* acted in time to make the best of it. She sliced through the water between the two steamers with both port and starboard batteries fully engaged. *Montezuma* and *Guadaloupe* each took a terrific pounding and suffered numerous casualties. *Austin's* gunfire put one of *Guadaloupe's* paddles out of action, and the big steamer began to limp out of the action on the one remaining. *Montezuma* covered her retirement but also moved off. *Austin*, with *Wharton* at a distance behind her, gave chase. During the 14-mile stern chase, *Austin* took at least nine major-caliber hits. Though badly shot up, the little Texas flagship pursued the Mexicans for three hours before giving it up due to structural damage and dangerous leaks. That afternoon, the two Texans reentered their anchorage and began feverish repairs.

Though he had fought a battle which effectively raised the siege of Campeche, breathed new life into the Yucatan federalist cause, and thereby foiled Mexican plans for a seaborne invasion of Texas supported by a reconciled Yucatan, Commodore Moore was declared a pirate by Texas President Sam Houston. Upon learning of that turn of events, Moore conferred with Texas Navy Commissioner Morgan. The two concluded that they had to return to Texas to explain their actions. The Mexican fleet remained in the area until late June, precluding the Texans' departure. Finally on 27 June, the opportunity came. *Austin* and *Wharton* put to sea. They made stops at Sisal and at the Arcas Islands before setting a course for Galveston. *Austin* and her consort arrived at their destination on 14 July 1843.

Five days after their arrival, Commodore Moore and Comdr. John T. K. Lothrop of *Wharton* were relieved of command and

tendered dishonorable discharges from the Texas Navy. Their successors quickly executed further orders to pay off the bulk of the sailors. The Texas Navy, for all intents and purposes, ceased to exist except on paper. *Austin* languished at Galveston until Texas was annexed by the United States in December of 1845. As a result of that action, *Austin* became a unit of the United States Navy. She was formally taken over at Galveston on 11 May 1846. Though in poor condition, she was moved to the Pensacola Navy Yard where she served as a receiving ship. Sometime in 1848, *Austin* was broken up at Pensacola.

II

(DE-15: dp. 1,140; l. 289'5"; b. 35'13/8"; dr. 9'11" (f.); s. 20 k.; cpl. 199; a. 3 3", 6 40mm., 5 20mm., 8 dep., 1 dep. (hh.), 2 det.; cl. *Ewarts*)

The second *Austin* (DE-15) was laid down on 14 March 1942 at the Mare Island Navy Yard as HMS *Blackwood* (BDE-15) for the United Kingdom under the terms of the lend-lease agreement; launched on 25 September 1942; sponsored by Mrs. W. C. Springer; taken over by the United States Navy on 25 January 1943 and redesignated DE-15; and commissioned on 13 February 1943, Lt. Comdr. H. G. Claudius, USNR, in command. The destroyer escort was apparently commissioned as simply *DE-15* for the name *Austin* was not assigned to her until 19 February 1943, six days after she went into commission.

Assigned to Escort Division (CortDiv) 14, the ship conducted shakedown training out of San Diego between 23 March and 23 April. On the latter day, she put to sea to escort a convoy to Cold Bay, Alaska. She returned to San Diego on 11 May and began convoy escort missions between the west coast and the Hawaiian Islands. Between mid-May and early September, *Austin* made two round-trip voyages between San Diego and Oahu and then a single, one-way run from the west coast back to Pearl Harbor. On 2 September, she stood out of that base; shaped a course for the Aleutian Islands; and, on 14 September, joined the Alaskan Sea Frontier. For just over one year, *Austin* plied the cold waters of the north Pacific escorting ships between Alaskan ports, conducting patrols, performing weather ship duties, and serving as a homing point for aircraft.

The warship departed Alaska on 23 September; arrived in San Francisco, Calif., a week later, and received a regular overhaul which lasted until 17 November. On 3 December, she once more weighed anchor for Hawaii. *Austin* operated out of Pearl Harbor as a training vessel with the Pacific Fleet Submarine Training Command until 20 March, when she set out for the Central Pacific. On 1 April, the destroyer escort reported for duty with forces assigned to the Commander, Forward Areas, and, for a little more than two months, conducted antisubmarine patrols and air/sea rescue missions out of Ulithi Atoll in the Western Caroline Islands. She finished that assignment on 10 June when she shaped a course for the Mariana Islands. For the next four months, *Austin* operated out of Guam and Saipan. In addition to antisubmarine patrols and air/sea rescue missions, she escorted convoys to such places as Iwo Jima, Eniwetok, and Okinawa. Following the cessation of hostilities in mid-August, she conducted search missions in the northern Marianas for enemy hold-outs and for survivors of downed B-29's. The warship also patrolled Truk Atoll briefly before occupation forces arrived there in strength.

On 12 October, she departed Guam in company with the other ships of CortDiv 14, bound for San Pedro, Calif., and inactivation. On 17 November, she reported to the Commander, Western Sea Frontier, to prepare for decommissioning and, on 21 December 1945, was placed out of commission at Terminal Island Naval Shipyard. *Austin* was berthed with the Pacific Reserve Fleet until scrapped. On 8 January 1946, her name was struck from the Navy list. The Terminal Island Naval Shipyard completed scrapping her on 9 January 1947.

III

(LPD-4: dp. 16,914; l. 569'; b. 105'; dr. 23'; s. 21 k.; cpl. 1,438; a. 8 3"; cl. *Austin*)

The third *Austin* (LPD-4) was laid down on 4 February 1963 at Brooklyn, N.Y., by the New York Naval Shipyard; launched on 27 June 1964; sponsored by Miss Lynda Bird Johnson, the



Austin (LPD-4), 29 April 1965. (USN 1111157)

daughter of President Lyndon B. Johnson; and commissioned on 6 February 1965, Capt. William H. Shaw in command.

The amphibious transport dock remained at Brooklyn through May, then sailed to Norfolk, Va., on 26 May to complete her outfitting. During September and October, she was engaged in shakedown training in the vicinity of Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The ship then made a port call at Corpus Christi, Tex., before returning to her home port of Norfolk in November.

From November 1965 through April 1966, *Austin* operated in the Norfolk area before entering the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard on 5 May for repairs and alterations. When this work was completed, she headed for the Caribbean to conduct two weeks of trials off Vieques Island, Puerto Rico. The ship next sailed to the Dominican Republic to assist in the withdrawal of units of the Inter-American Peace Force which had helped restore stability during a political crisis. These units were disembarked at Sunny Point, N.C., on 9 August; and she then returned, via Norfolk, to Philadelphia where she arrived on the 21st for adjustments to her main propulsion plant. On 3 November, *Austin* returned to Norfolk.

She spent the next four and one-half months in preparation for an extended deployment as a unit of the Caribbean Amphibious Ready Group. On 15 April 1967, *Austin* touched at Morehead City, N.C., to embark Marine Corps units and then proceeded to the Caribbean. While there, she participated in numerous amphibious training exercises and made port visits at Ponce and San Juan, Puerto Rico; Willemstad, Curaçao; St. Thomas, Virgin Islands; Colon, Panama; and Guantanamo Bay. The vessel returned her marines to Morehead City on 17 August and arrived at Norfolk on 19 August for a leave and upkeep period. She got underway again on 4 November to become a part of the recovery force for the *Apollo IV* space mission. From 13 to 16 November, *Austin* held amphibious training exercises, then returned to Norfolk for the holidays.

She sailed on 8 January 1968 to carry naval personnel and equipment to Key West, Fla. After continuing on to Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, the ship arrived back in Norfolk on 25 January. During February, March, and April, she took part in

several training exercises along the east coast. On 13 May, another cruise to the Caribbean began which included visits to Bermuda; Nassau, Bahamas; San Juan, Puerto Rico; and Key West. The vessel briefly returned to Norfolk on 3 June and then retraced her route to take part in Operation "Race Run," at Vieques Island. *Austin* was back in home port on 30 June and entered the Norfolk Naval Shipyard on 19 July for an overhaul.

Refresher training at Guantanamo Bay in late January 1969 was followed by two weeks of amphibious warfare training in the Virginia capes area. In April, *Austin* took part in special amphibious exercises before beginning another deployment to the Caribbean on 18 May. During the four-month cruise, she was involved in Operation "Exotic Dancer II," held off Puerto Rico, and visits included San Juan and Roosevelt Roads; La Guaira, Venezuela; Colon, Panama; Guantanamo Bay; Bridgetown, Barbados; and St. Thomas. This deployment ended on 10 September, and the ship began a period of leave and upkeep at Norfolk. She sailed again on 4 November as a recovery ship in support of the *Apollo XII* spaceshot and remained on station until 24 November when she began the voyage back to Norfolk. *Austin* made a brief stop at Port of Spain, Trinidad, on 29 and 30 November and arrived at Norfolk on 6 December.

Austin spent the first two and one-half months of 1970 in port, before sailing on 17 March with Amphibious Squadron (PhibRon) 2 for the Mediterranean. The deployment included amphibious landing exercises and stops at Rota and Malaga, Spain; Genoa and Naples, Italy; Cannes, France; and Valletta, Malta. *Austin* lost her stern gate on 6 June, and temporary repairs were made at Malta from 16 to 30 June. The ship arrived back in Norfolk on 13 July to begin a yard period for permanent repairs. She emerged from the shipyard on 22 September and began refresher training. *Austin* again deployed with PhibRon 2 on 16 November. During the cruise, *Austin* held numerous amphibious and antisubmarine warfare exercises. She also visited Genoa, Livorno, and Naples, Italy; Barcelona and Rota, Spain; Mersin, Turkey; and Athens, Greece. On 7 May 1971, *Austin* ended the cruise at Norfolk.

The ship got underway again on 14 July for operations in conjunction with the recovery of the *Apollo XV* space capsule.

The first two weeks in August were spent in mine counter-measures exercises held in the area of Charleston, S.C. *Austin* then entered a period of type training and amphibious exercises followed by more mine warfare exercises in early November. She returned to Norfolk on 12 November for the holidays.

Austin began 1972 with Exercise "Snowy Beach," a large-scale landing exercise held off the coast of Maine. From 15 February to 20 March, she participated in Operation "Springboard," in the Caribbean. The ship visited the Naval Academy from 17 to 20 April to hold indoctrination tours for midshipmen. During the next two months, she conducted type training and took part in Exercises "Exotic Dancer," and "Escort Tiger." On 5 July, the vessel unloaded all ammunition in preparation for overhaul. She entered the Maryland Shipbuilding and Drydock Co., Baltimore, Md., on 11 July. Work continued there until 11 October, when the ship was towed to the Norfolk Naval Shipyard for completion of the yard work.

On 15 March 1973, *Austin* began post-repair trials. She sailed to Guantanamo Bay on 22 March and, after refresher training, returned to Norfolk on 24 April. After another two months of preparation, the vessel sailed on 7 June for another Mediterranean deployment. Her ports of call included Alicante, Barcelona, and Rota, Spain; Trieste and Venice, Italy; and Corfu, Athens, and Rhodes, Greece. She took part in several exercises, including NATO Exercise, "Deep Furrow," from 18 September to 4 October. On 10 October, *Austin* got underway for Soudha Bay, Crete, as a part of the 6th Fleet response to the Arab-Israeli War. In early December, she began the trip back to Norfolk. After pausing briefly at Morehead City on 19 December, she arrived at Norfolk on 20 December for post-deployment standdown.

The ship got underway on 8 February 1974 for Guantanamo Bay as a unit of the Caribbean Amphibious Ready Group. She operated from various points in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands through August. In early September, *Austin* visited Caracas, Venezuela, and Willemstad, Curaçao. While in Curaçao, 154 Dutch marines were embarked for Exercise "Doria Salute VII." The marines disembarked at Vieques Island; then *Austin* returned—via San Juan, Aruba, and Curaçao—to Norfolk on 19 March. However, she headed back toward the Caribbean on 24 April. The first country visited was Panama, where marines disembarked for jungle warfare training. Her subsequent ports of call included Cartagena, Colombia; Vieques, Puerto Rico; and St. Johns, Antigua. From 25 May to 2 June, *Austin* was back in Norfolk for upkeep. She resumed duty on 30 October by sailing to the Canal Zone. The ship continued her routine of shuttling marines and their equipment between various Caribbean ports through 16 December, when she arrived back at Norfolk.

On 25 February 1975, *Austin* deployed once more to the Mediterranean and carried out amphibious training exercises and midshipmen training cruises in that area, visiting ports in Spain, Italy, and France before returning to Norfolk on 20 August. She then began an extended period of availability.

The ship got underway on 14 January 1976 to load ammunition and sailed a week later for the Caribbean. After a brief training period at Guantanamo Bay, she continued on to Curaçao. From 4 to 16 February, *Austin* took part in Exercise "Rum Punch 76." She was back in home port on 21 February for upkeep.

For the next four months, the amphibious transport dock was involved in a series of inspections, training exercises, and Naval Reserve training cruises. On 9 June, she returned briefly to the Caribbean and then made a short visit to New York City in early July. *Austin* was back in Norfolk on 10 July and began preparations for overseas movement. She sailed on 20 August for northern Europe. Her ports of call during the cruise included Orland, Norway; Edinburgh, Scotland; Scapa Flow, Orkney Islands; Esbjerg, Denmark; Amsterdam, Netherlands; Bremerhaven, Germany; and Portsmouth, England. After a stop at Morehead City to disembark marines she arrived in Norfolk on 11 November.

The ship went to Yorktown, Va., on 17 January 1977 to unload ammunition prior to her scheduled overhaul. She proceeded to Baltimore on 2 February and commenced overhaul at the Maryland Shipbuilding and Drydock Co. The work was finished on 16 February 1978, and *Austin* returned the next day to Norfolk. After a brief stay, she sailed to Guantanamo Bay for refresher training, but was back in Norfolk on 25 April. After several months of training, the vessel got underway on 22 August for the north Atlantic. There she took part in Operation "Northern

Wedding," in conjunction with other NATO naval units, and made stops in Norway, Denmark, and England, before returning to Norfolk on 31 October.

Austin sailed on 30 January 1980 for another Mediterranean deployment. During this trip, she touched at Lisbon, Portugal; Cartagena, Spain; Athens, Greece; and Naples, Genoa, and Venice, Italy. The ship returned to her home port on 11 July. After a brief respite, she sailed for South America on 15 October and participated in Operations "Unitas," and "Allied Caribe 80." The warship took part in an amphibious operation with Brazilian naval forces. Operation "Allied Caribe 80" was held in the Antilles in conjunction with units from Great Britain, Canada, and the Netherlands. *Austin* later provided hurricane relief assistance to the inhabitants of Dominica. The ship returned to Norfolk on 7 December, and she continued operations from that port into 1981.

On 3 February 1981, *Austin* put to sea from Norfolk on her way to Morehead City, N.C., to embark Marine Corps units. From Morehead City, she headed for the Arctic Circle near Norway where she participated in cold weather training. The warship returned to Norfolk on 17 April and resumed normal operations out of that port. Late in June, she voyaged south and west to the gulf coast of Florida to perform a special project for the Chief of Naval Operations. During the trip home, *Austin* visited Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., and Nassau in the Bahamas. Arriving back at Norfolk on 8 July, she resumed a normal schedule of operations until the beginning of September when she entered the yard at the Norfolk Shipbuilding & Drydock Co. to begin an 11-month overhaul.

Austin completed the repair period on 2 August 1982 and spent most of the remainder of the year undergoing post-overhaul inspections and examinations at Norfolk. She began 1983 with a cruise to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to conduct post-overhaul refresher training. During the early part of February, the warship took an extended break from training to make a 12-day port visit to New Orleans, La., for the Mardi Gras festival. *Austin* resumed refresher training on 19 February and concluded it on 1 March. In March and early April, she operated out of Norfolk and then spent the last three weeks of April in port preparing to deploy to the troubled eastern Mediterranean. On 8 May, *Austin* set sail for Morehead City where she embarked the 1st Battalion, 8th Marines (BLT 1/8), and the 24th Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU 24) before heading out across the Atlantic.

The warship arrived in the Mediterranean late in May and disembarked the Marine Corps units at Beirut, Lebanon, where a guerilla-style civil war among a virtual rainbow of factions, complicated by military incursions on the parts of Syria and Israel, had been in progress at varying levels of intensity for some time. In September 1982, the assassination of president-elect Bashir Gemayel touched off atrocities that brought a multinational peacekeeping force into the country soon thereafter. In May 1983, the marines of BLT 1/8 and MAU 24 replaced the part of that force protecting Beirut International Airport. *Austin*, for her part, remained in the vicinity providing support for the troops, anchoring nearby during the day and steaming out to sea at night.

As tense as the situation in Lebanon was, ship and marines quickly settled into a routine. Too quickly perhaps, for on 23 October 1983, a terrorist shattered that routine when he drove an explosives-laden truck into the lobby of the headquarters of the Marine Corps units stationed ashore. The detonation of the mobile bomb destroyed the headquarters, killed 241 men and injured over 100 others. *Austin* responded to the emergency quickly by providing men to stand security watches and help in the search for survivors. In November, the amphibious transport dock departed the eastern Mediterranean and began the voyage home. On 7 December, she disembarked the remnants of BLT 1/8 and MAU 24 at Morehead City. The following day, *Austin* put into port at Little Creek, Va., and began post-deployment leave and upkeep.

The warship remained in port at Little Creek for the first six weeks of 1984. On 13 February, she put to sea to participate in a minesweeping exercise off the coast of North Carolina before heading for Scandinavian waters. During the Atlantic transit and during her time in the Arctic waters near Norway, *Austin* and other Navy warships joined elements of the navies of Canada, Denmark, Norway, and the United Kingdom in conducting the two-part NATO Exercise "United Effort/Teamwork '84."

Following the conclusion of the exercise, the amphibious transport dock made ceremonial visits to ports in Norway, the Netherlands, and in the United Kingdom. She returned to Little Creek on 28 April after a brief stop at Morehead City to disembark marines and unload their equipment.

In June, at the conclusion of the usual post-deployment standdown, *Austin* embarked upon a schedule of normal operations along the east coast. That employment occupied her time for the remainder of 1984 and during the first half of 1985. On 2 July 1985, she made the brief voyage to Morehead City where she embarked Marine Corps units and their equipment for another tour of duty with the 6th Fleet. The amphibious transport dock arrived in Rota, Spain, on 13 July and entered the Mediterranean Sea the following day. While the problems in Lebanon continued, direct American military involvement there had ceased. Thus *Austin* accomplished her 1985 Mediterranean deployment in a more routine fashion. It consisted of bilateral and multilateral exercises punctuated by visits to ports throughout the "middle sea." She completed turnover procedures at Rota, Spain, between 4 and 7 December and then put to sea for the voyage home. *Austin* stopped at Morehead City on the 18th and 19th to disembark marines and stood into Norfolk on the 20th.

In January 1986, the amphibious transport dock began a restricted availability at pierside in Norfolk. She finished repairs late in April and resumed normal operations out of Norfolk. *Austin* pursued those activities until the middle of August. She departed Norfolk on 12 August and, after embarking Marine Corps units at Morehead City on the 13th, set sail for northern Europe and another series of exercises with forces of other NATO nations. The cruise—highlighted by visits to Norway, Denmark, Germany, and England—lasted through the first week in October. On 8 October, *Austin* stood out of Dover, England, and shaped a course back to the United States. Steaming by way of Morehead City, the amphibious transport dock arrived in Little Creek on 21 October. On 3 November, she moved from Little Creek to the Norfolk Shipbuilding & Drydock Co. where she began a regular overhaul. As of the beginning of 1987, *Austin* was still undergoing repairs at Norfolk.

Autauga

A county in central Alabama established on 21 November 1818. Its seat is Prattville. The Indian village of that name served as a home for the Tawasa tribe.

(AK-160: dp. 2,382; l. 338'6"; b. 50'0"; dr. 21'1" (lim.); s. 11.5 k.; cpl. 85; a. 1 3", 6 20mm.; cl. *Alamosa*; T. C1-M-AV1)

Autauga (AK-160) was laid down under a Maritime Commission contract (MC hull 2105) on 10 May 1944 at Richmond, Calif., by the Kaiser Cargo Co.; launched on 7 August 1944; sponsored by Mrs. Leroy Lloyd; delivered to the Navy at her builder's yard on 24 November 1944; and commissioned the same day, Lt. Comdr. George L. Eastman, USNR, in command.

After conversion to a cargo ship at the Navy Drydocks, Terminal Island, Calif., between 6 December 1944 and 9 January 1945, *Autauga* conducted her shakedown training out of San Pedro from 10 to 22 January before shifting to Port Chicago early in February to load cargo. *Autauga* then departed San Francisco on 16 February and, following a stop in the Marshalls, reached the Carolines one month later. After reporting to Commander, Service Squadron (ServRon) 10, at Ulithi for duty as an ammunition issue and rework ship, she received munitions from bulk carriers and then issued them to ships and craft that ranged from patrol boats to battleships.

Leaving Ulithi in her wake on 9 July, the cargo ship sailed for the Marshalls and reached Eniwetok on the 16th to resume operation as an ammunition issue and rework vessel of Service Division 102. After hostilities with Japan ended in mid-August, she sailed for the United States on 8 November, having serviced almost 400 ships.

Autauga reached the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard on the 29th. Although initially earmarked for delivery to the War Shipping Administration (WSA) at Norfolk, Va., she was later directed to remain in the 13th Naval District because of the heavy workload at Norfolk. Decommissioned on 24 June 1946, *Autauga* was delivered to the WSA the next day, and her name was struck from the Navy list on 19 July 1946.

Acquired by the *Koninklijke Nederlandsche Stoomboot-Mattschappij* N.V. of Amsterdam, Holland, and renamed *Hersilia*, the former Navy cargo ship operated out of Amsterdam, under the Dutch flag, from 1949 to 1962. Subsequently bought by the Saudia Arabian concern, the Saudi Lines, and renamed *Fauzia B*, she served commercially from 1963 to 1971 before her name disappeared from contemporary shipping registers in 1972.

Avalon

A mythical island in the Arthurian legends located somewhere to the west of England and believed to be an earthly paradise.

(MB: t. 16 (gross); l. 46'0"; b. 10'6"; dr. 3'1" (mean); s. 8.6 k.)

Avalon—a motorboat constructed in 1908 at Greenport, Long Island, N.Y., by the Greenport Basin & Construction Co.—was inspected for possible service on section patrol duty and taken into Navy custody on 19 May 1917 by officials of the 3d Naval District. Although her name appeared on, and was struck from, the Navy list, no records have been found that indicate *Avalon* was ever commissioned by the Navy. The sources, however, suggest that she was in Navy custody until returned to her owner on 22 December 1918. Her name was struck from the Navy list that same day.

Blue Ridge (Id. No. 2432) (q.v.) was renamed *Avalon* on 18 August 1919 by order of the Office of the Secretary of the Navy even though her name had been struck from the Navy list on 7 July 1919.

DSRV-2—a deep submergence rescue vehicle or diving bell—was informally referred to as *Avalon*, though officially regarded as an unnamed service craft.

Avenge

Originally assigned the name *Avenge* on 17 May 1941, AMc-65 was renamed *Assertive* (q.v.) on 23 May 1941.

I

(AMc-66: dp. 195; l. 97'; b. 22'; dr. 9'; s. 10 k.; cpl. 19; a. 2 .50-cal. mg.; cl. *Accentor*)

Bulwark (AMc-66) was laid down on 8 May 1941 at South Bristol, Maine, by the Bristol Yacht Building Co.; renamed *Avenge* on 17 May 1941; launched on 14 February 1942; sponsored by Mrs. William A. Parker; and placed in service at Boston on 2 April 1942.

Following fitting out at Boston, *Avenge* sailed for Hampton Roads and arrived at Yorktown, Va., on 23 April for training at the Mine Warfare School. Upon completion of the training, *Avenge* reported to the 6th Naval District, Charleston, S.C., for duty.

Avenge served at Charleston for the duration of her career. On 14 December 1945, the ship was placed out of service and laid up in the Wando River. Her name was struck from the Navy list on 8 January 1946, and the ship was turned over to the Maritime Commission for disposal on 8 August. She was subsequently sold to the United Fisheries Co., Gloucester, Mass.

II

(AM-423: dp. 620; l. 172'; b. 36'; dr. 10'; s. 15 k.; cpl. 74; a. 1 40mm.; cl. *Aggressive*)

The second *Avenge* (AM-423) was laid down on 1 August 1951 at Stamford, Conn., by the Luders Marine Construction Co.; launched on 15 March 1953; sponsored by Mrs. A. E. Luders, Jr.; and commissioned at the New York Navy Yard on 13 May 1954, Lt. Waymon Taylor in command.

After completing shakedown training, the minesweeper sailed on 6 August for her home port, Charleston, S.C., and arrived

there on 8 August. She conducted local operations until entering the Charleston Naval Shipyard on 14 January 1955 for conversion. During this period, her designation was changed to MSO-423, before she resumed her activities in April and began preparations for deployment.

On 6 September, *Avenge* sailed for the Mediterranean. Her ports of call during that deployment with the 6th Fleet included Gibraltar; Barcelona, Spain; Nice, Cannes, and Toulon, France; Monaco; Valletta, Malta; Naples, Italy; and Palma de Mallorca, Balearic Islands. The ship left Gibraltar on 17 January 1956 and arrived back in Charleston on the 31st. Following leave and upkeep, the ship sailed on 9 April for the coast of Nova Scotia and participated in minesweeping operations off Halifax before getting underway on 14 May to return to her home port.

The vessel operated for two months in the Charleston area, then left on 16 July to return to Canadian waters. She spent two months assisting in survey and beach clearance operations in connection with DEW line radar sites. The ship left St. Johns, Newfoundland, on 4 September, and arrived back in Charleston on 11 September.

Avenge returned to Argentia, Newfoundland, on 15 January 1957, took part in cold weather minesweeping operations, and then got underway for New York on 30 January. She touched at Charleston on 7 February and held local operations through 29 August. On that day, the minesweeper sailed for the Mediterranean. After reaching Gibraltar, she visited Valletta, Malta; Suda Bay, Crete; Kos Island, Greece; Gaeta and Naples, Italy; and Izmir, Turkey. While deployed with the 6th Fleet, she conducted joint exercises with the Italian Navy at Gaeta. She also held combined operations with the British Navy at Malta in January 1958. After five months in the Mediterranean, *Avenge* returned to Charleston on 13 February.

In late March, the ship took part in amphibious exercises at Onslow Beach, N.C., and in mine exercises at Little Creek, Va. *Avenge* departed Charleston on 11 January 1959, bound for Savannah, Ga., where she arrived on the 12th and entered the shipyard of the Savannah Machine and Foundry Co. for overhaul. The minesweeper returned to Charleston on 14 March for refresher training. During May and June, she took part in a mine test in the Charleston area before sailing once more on 24 July for the Mediterranean.

While on duty with the 6th Fleet, *Avenge* took part in numerous exercises. The largest came in October at La Spezia, Italy, when she joined units of the French, Greek, Turkish, Belgian, and Italian navies in Exercise "Gauge." She returned to Charleston on 11 February 1960.

The ship departed Charleston on 23 May to participate in Operation "Springboard," in the Caribbean. In July, she carried out an assignment off Cape Canaveral, Fla., and then proceeded to her home port for overhaul.

Avenge headed back to the Caribbean in January 1961 for amphibious exercises which lasted well into February. After returning home, she made an unscheduled deployment to the Caribbean in April in response to a political crisis in the Dominican Republic and did not get back to Charleston until August. Thereafter, type training and minesweeping exercises off the South Carolina coast kept her busy through the end of 1961.

In January 1962, *Avenge* operated from Panama City, Fla., providing services for the Naval Mine Defense Laboratory and reported back to her home port in February. Following an overhaul, she returned to Panama City in August. Intensive minesweeping training exercises in company with Mine Division 82 occupied her time in October and November.

Early in January 1963, the ship embarked upon another Mediterranean tour during which she took part in several combined exercises and visited ports in Italy, Sardinia, and France. *Avenge* participated in NATO Exercise "Fair Game" before returning to Charleston on 5 June. Following leave and upkeep, she proceeded to Panama City to work with the Naval Mine Defense Laboratory. The minesweeper reported back to Charleston on 20 November and began preparations for a deployment to the Caribbean.

In February 1964, the vessel began a two-month cruise to the Caribbean, working out of Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. She arrived back in Charleston in April for leave and upkeep and then entered the naval shipyard at Charleston in May for repairs which were followed by refresher training and local operations. In late December, *Avenge* got underway for the Caribbean. She

visited Guantanamo Bay; Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico; and Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles. The end of 1964 found *Avenge* anchored at Frederiksted, Saint Croix, in the American Virgin Islands.

During January and February 1965, *Avenge* operated out of Guantanamo Bay before arriving back at Charleston in March and resuming a full schedule of training exercises and operations. In August, she was part of the Gemini V recovery force off Cape Kennedy, Fla. In early December, the minesweeper took part in an amphibious exercise off Vieques, Puerto Rico, before returning to her home port for the Christmas holidays.

In February 1966, the ship was part of the recovery force off Cape Kennedy during tests of the Apollo rocket and returned to Charleston in March and conducted local operations through June. She sailed to Savannah once more in early July for another period of overhaul, and she left the shipyard in September for refresher training in the Norfolk area.

The vessel returned to Panama City on 14 January 1967 and helped to test minesweeping gear being developed for use by helicopters. She visited the cities of Tampa, West Palm Beach, and Jacksonville, Fla., in February and arrived back at Charleston on 28 February. After a brief tender availability, *Avenge* provided services to the Mine Warfare School at Charleston before sailing for Newport, R.I., on 2 May to conduct refresher training. Following a brief visit to Boston, Mass., on 20 May, she arrived in Charleston on 26 May.

The minesweeper entered Detyens Shipyard, Wando, S.C., on 17 July for alterations. Upon the completion of the modifications and repairs, she prepared for deployment and sailed on 16 August for the Mediterranean. After suffering extensive damage en route, *Avenge* reached Rota, Spain, on 2 September and remained there for repairs until sailing on 25 September for Izmir, Turkey, where she rejoined her division. She participated in exercises off Dikili, Turkey, with British and Turkish ships from 16 through 25 October. *Avenge* moved to Naples in early November for a tender availability and then visited La Spezia, Italy; Ajaccio and Lovo Santo, Corsica; and Toulon, France, before closing the year at Naples undergoing upkeep.

An amphibious exercise took place at Porto Scudo, Sardinia, on 3 January 1968, 10 days before *Avenge* began her journey home on 13 January. She reached Charleston on 3 February and entered a leave and upkeep status. The minesweeper got underway on 15 April to take part in mine tests and returned to port on 26 May for a standdown period in preparation for her forthcoming modernization.

Avenge was taken in tow on 26 August for the voyage to Baltimore, Md., where she entered the Bethlehem Steel Corporation's Key Highway Shipyard on 30 August. The yardwork continued into 1969. On 27 September, she was drydocked at Bethlehem's Fort McHenry Shipyard in Baltimore. A fire of unknown origin broke out on 6 October and caused extensive damage to the midships section of the vessel. A subsequent survey found that it would not be economically feasible to restore the vessel, and *Avenge* was decommissioned on 31 January 1970. Her name was struck from the Navy list on 1 February 1970.

Avenger

Page 39 in Volume I, Series II, of the *Official Records of the Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion* contains a spurious entry for a bark named *Avenger*. The ship listed there as *Avenger* was in reality the bark, *Arthur* (q.v.).

I

(SwRam: t. 410; l. 210'0"; b. 40'0"; dr. 6'0"; s. 12 mph.; a. 1 100-pdr. P.r., 1 12-pdr. P.r., 4 24-pdr. sb.)

On 7 December 1863, the War Department transferred to the Navy two wooden-hulled, side-wheel rams then being built at New Albany, Ind., for the Army's Mississippi Marine Brigade. On that day, as he was reporting having taken possession of these still-unfinished vessels, Rear Admiral David Dixon Porter—who then commanded the Mississippi Squadron—suggested that they be named *Avenger* and *Vindicator*.

On 19 December, the larger ship, *Avenger*, was assigned to the squadron's Third District which was responsible for control-

ling the Mississippi between Natchez, Miss., and the mouth of the Red River. Completed late in February 1864, this ram dropped down the Ohio River and was commissioned at Cairo, Ill., on the 29th of that month, Acting Volunteer Lt. Charles A. Wright in command.

On 12 March, *Avenger*—carrying dispatches and a cargo of ordnance stores—headed downstream to join a powerful naval force which Porter had recently led up the Red River to cooperate with Army troops then pushing through Louisiana in a generally northwesterly direction toward Shreveport. The major objectives of the Red River campaign were: the establishment of a Union foothold in Texas to weaken Confederate strength west of the Mississippi, the impeding of French interventionism in Mexico, and the acquisition of cotton for idle textile mills in the North.

However, when *Avenger* reached a point only some six miles below Cairo, she encountered an upward-bound merchant steamer whose pilot attempted to pass her on the wrong side of the stream. The two vessels collided, and *Avenger* suffered considerable damage to her starboard side. Although she was able to continue on down the Mississippi, the ram lost nearly a day at Memphis undergoing repairs. Her trip downriver also revealed defects in her machinery which slowed her progress, but she finally reached the mouth of the Red River on the 16th. There, orders from Porter awaited which directed her to return North with messages. After coaling, she got underway on the 17th and arrived back at Cairo on the 23d.

There, Wright's report of her engineering difficulties resulted in a survey of the ship. The inspectors recommended that a set of blowers be installed to increase the efficiency of her boilers. While this work was being performed by the repair ship *Samson*, it was discovered that the ship's port boilers were badly burned and required repairs. After temporary remedies were made, *Avenger* entered the Red River on 2 April carrying messages upstream. Two days later, she took station at the mouth of the Black River and, on the 7th, she entered the Ouachita in an expedition commanded by Lt. Comdr. James P. Foster in the side-wheel ram *Lafayette*. The Union warships ascended that tributary as high as Ouachita City and confiscated some 3,000 bales of cotton; liberated 800 negroes; and burned the courthouse at Monroe, La., the railroad depot there, and a bridge over the stream. They stood down the Ouachita on the 12th and returned to the Mississippi when they learned that the famous Confederate cavalry commander, Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest, had attacked Fort Pillow, Tenn.

Foster, accompanied by *Avenger* and *Choctaw*, ascended the Mississippi to check Forrest. However, at Memphis he learned that, after pillaging Fort Pillow, the dreaded Southern raider had abandoned the fallen Union stronghold and retired inland. Therefore, *Avenger*—which had been suffering engine trouble—was free to remain at Memphis for repairs which lasted through the end of April.

The ram then returned to the mouth of the Red River where she was assigned to guard the coaling barge stationed there. She was relieved by *Nymph* on 3 May and proceeded to the mouth of the Black River with additional coal barges in tow. There she was again relieved and steamed upriver to join *Forest Rose* on patrol in the vicinity of Fort deRussy. At that fort, *Avenger* exchanged shots with Southern sharpshooters on 12 May; and she and her consort engaged the enemy several times as they continued patrols up and down the river during the next five days.

The ram returned to the mouth of the Red River on 17 May to coal and then continued downriver to Simmesport to embark Major General Nathaniel P. Banks, the commander of the Army forces involved in the Red River expedition, for passage to New Orleans. The advance of his troops had been checked at the Battle of Pleasant Hill and a shortage of ammunition, supplies, and water had forced him to withdraw.

In May, *Avenger* was stationed at Morganza, La., and carried out blockading duties between Morganza and Donaldsonville through November, when she was ordered to help in patrolling the Mississippi between Vicksburg and Natchez, Miss.

On 21 November 1864, after spotting a skiff crossing the river at Bruinsburg, Miss., *Avenger* shelled the area and sent a landing party ashore which found contraband concealed in the undergrowth. The landing party captured several Confederate soldiers and confiscated 154 rifles with bayonets, and several skiffs and wagons. She continued to operate in the Mississippi

and, in March 1865, was stationed off Cole's Creek to prevent Confederate troops and supplies from crossing the river. The patrols were intensified in late April and early May in the effort to capture Jefferson Davis, who was believed to be attempting to escape across the Mississippi. After the President of the defeated Confederacy was captured in Georgia on 10 May, the naval forces employed in blockade duties were gradually reduced.

In July 1865, *Avenger* was sent to Mound City where she was decommissioned on 1 August. Sold at public auction there on 29 November 1865 to Cutting & Ellis, the former ram was documented as *Balize* on 16 April 1867 and began service out of New Orleans as a merchantman. The steamer continued commercial operations until 1871.

II

(Yacht: dp. 35.5 t.; l. 74'0"; b. 15'0"; dr. 3'3" (mean); s. 15 k.; cpl. 11; a. (July 1918) 1 3-pdr., 2 mg., 3 dc.)

The second *Avenger*, a wooden-hulled screw yacht designed by J. Murray Watts and built in 1917 by Clement A. Troth of Camden, N.J., was inspected by the Navy on 11 January 1918 and acquired by the Navy in May 1918 under free lease from Phillips J. Wunderle of Glenside, Pa., for service in the 4th Naval District. Assigned the identification number SP-2646, *Avenger* was commissioned on 29 May 1918 while she lay alongside Pier 19, North Wharves, Philadelphia, Pa., Chief Boatswain's Mate Phillips J. Wunderle, USNR (her peacetime owner "called to the colors"), in command.

Completing the initial phases of her fitting out by the second week of June 1918, *Avenger* got underway for League Island on the morning of the 10th. She did not go far before she ran aground in shoal water near the back channel. With low water prevailing, her sailors prepared to wait for the incoming tide to refloat *Avenger*, but three vessels unexpectedly arrived on the scene and offered assistance. With their help, *Avenger* was soon waterborne and proceeded to League Island.

However, since she was shipping water due to two damaged planks in her bottom, the yacht proceeded thence to Camden, N.J., for hull repairs at the boatyard of Quigley and Dorf on 11 and 12 June. After receiving new planking and a coat of paint on her bottom, she returned to pier 19, North Wharves, the next day, 13 June.

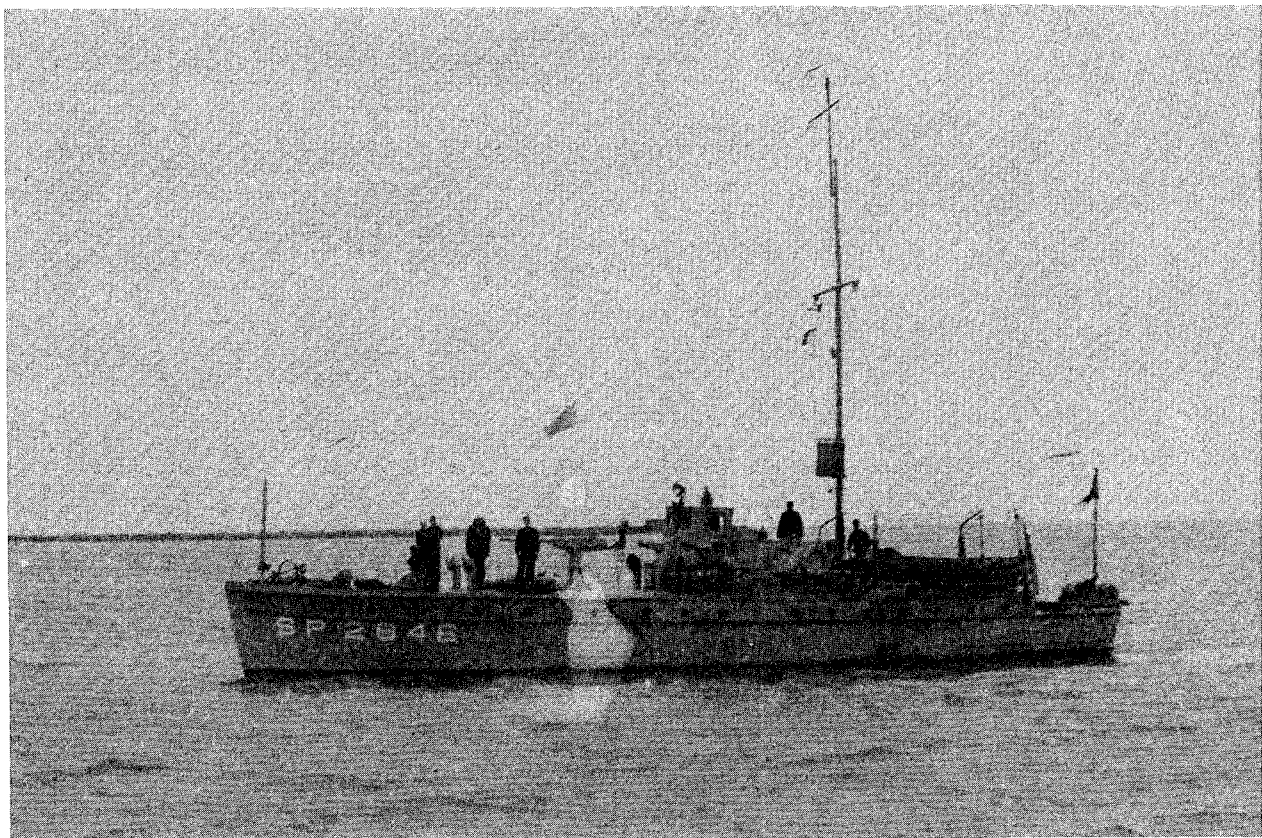
A week later, the vessel got underway at 1000, "Captain" Wunderle at the helm, and headed back toward League Island, where she took on board her main battery, a three-pounder gun, and installed it the next day. Further provisioning and outfitting alongside pier 19 followed: there, she received the balance of her armament, a pair of machine guns and four mounts, on 5 July. She obtained signals equipment and a large searchlight on the 11th and left pier 19 the next day for Fort Mifflin, where she took on ammunition. Later that same day, *Avenger* got underway for New Castle, Del., reaching her destination that evening, and tarried there for the night.

Pushing on the next day, *Avenger* reached Cape May, N.J., her assigned section base, on the 13th, via Reedy Island. The following morning, the erstwhile pleasure craft got underway for her maiden wartime patrol, which she conducted in waters off the McCrie Shoal Buoy.

During her second patrol, (18 to 20 July) she received information by wireless of enemy submarine activity near New York harbor and promptly loaded her three-pounder to be ready for action. She soon received a signal from *Emerald* (SP-177) to patrol toward the McCrie Shoal for a distance of 10 miles in search of the U-boat reported in their vicinity. In the predawn darkness on 20 July, *Avenger* drew within hailing distance of *Emerald* and received oral orders to instruct all northbound vessels to "hug the coast" because of the U-boats operating to seaward. In accordance with those orders, *Avenger* hailed a steamer at 0210 on the 20th and warned that Portland-bound vessel of her danger.

Avenger's third patrol (22 to 24 July) took her to waters off Atlantic City, N.J. When her fourth (26 to 28 July) took her across Delaware Bay to Lewes, Del., she sported a new weapon—three depth charges. The fifth (29 July to 1 August) again took her to patrol the shipping lanes off Atlantic City.

At 0825 on 7 August, *Avenger* had just commenced escorting a submarine when a muffler exploded on board. The damage apparently not severe enough to force the craft to curtail her assigned



Avenger (SP-2646), circa 1918. Close scrutiny of the original print shows this patrol craft to have a 1-pounder mounted forward, and two machine guns flanking her pilot house. Note her tall mast and the depth charge rack at her fantail. (NH 57247)

tasks, *Avenger* returned to Cape May that afternoon, remaining alongside the Fish Dock there until 12 August when she got underway, at the end of a towline, bound for Essington, Pa. Docking on the 13th, *Avenger* consequently underwent repairs to her hull and engines at Essington—a spell of yard work that lasted into early October, 1918. During that time, so that her crew would not get “rusty” on their weapons, they conducted rifle and machine gun practice at the local yacht club rifle range.

After her post-repair trial trip to Marcus Hook and back on 9 October, and her second (record) trial trip to Wilmington, Del., and return, *Avenger* returned briefly to Essington before moving back to her home base, Cape May, on the afternoon of 25 October. Underway the next morning, she patrolled off Cape May on the 28th and into the next day, when she was relieved on station by *Shrewsbury* (SP-70). *Avenger* underwent further repairs to her engines (30 October to 2 November) before she departed the Fish Dock, Cape May, at 0955 on 7 November on what proved to be her last patrol of the war.

She made port back at Cape May on the 9th. Her deck log for 11 November recounts the happy news received that date: “State department]t announces armistice signed at 5 a.m., Nov[ember] 11th.” Underway for Lewes on the 14th, *Avenger* returned to Cape May on the 30th and remained there a week before returning to the Corinthian Yacht Club, Essington, Pa., on the 8th of December. The next morning, she touched at Fort Mifflin to unload ammunition before mooring at pier 19, where her wireless outfit was removed and her three-pounder dismantled. At noon on 19 December, Chief Boatswain’s Mate Wunderle decommissioned *Avenger* and signed the receipt for the vessel, which was later delivered to her builder’s yard, Clement A. Troth’s, in Camden, where she was presumably prepared for civilian service.

After that brief stint as a commissioned craft of the United States Navy, *Avenger* then served under a succession of owners,

but retained her original name throughout. She disappeared from American yacht registers after 1929.

Rio Hudson—a C-3-type passenger-cargo vessel—was laid down under a Maritime Commission contract (MC hull 59) on 28 November 1939 at Chester, Pa., by the Sun Shipbuilding and Drydock Co.; launched on 27 November 1940; sponsored by Mrs. Warren L. Pierson; and acquired by the Navy on 31 July 1941 for conversion to an “aircraft escort vessel,” BAVG-2, one of the first six such ships built for the United Kingdom under lend-lease.

Renamed *Avenger* by the Royal Navy and given the pendant number D.14, this ship entered service in mid-1942 and spent her entire career in the Atlantic theater. She figured in what the British historian, Stephen Roskill, called “the closing of the ‘air gap’” in covering convoy runs to North Russia. Following the mauling of PQ-17, a convoy bound for Archangel in August 1942, convoy routers included *Avenger* in the screen of the next east-bound run, PQ-18. A dozen Hawker “Sea Hurricane” fighters and three Fairey “Swordfish” biplanes constituted her air group.

Joining PQ-18 on 9 September 1942, *Avenger* became the obvious target for the Luftwaffe in its attempt to cripple the convoy. Once within the range of German air bases in northern Norway, the convoy came under attack. On 13 September, waves of torpedo planes braved antiaircraft fire to deliver a successful attack, sinking eight of the convoy’s 39 merchantmen. *Avenger*’s fighters, unfortunately, were busy with the high-level bombers and shadowers—not the torpedo planes. This misdeployment of the fighters convinced *Avenger*’s captain to conserve his precious fighters for breaking up the large swarms of torpedo planes that had proved so successful, instead of expending their energies on the less dangerous “shadowers.”

On 14 September, one of *Avenger*’s planes teamed with the destroyer HMS *Onslow* to sink *U-589* after a 75-minute hunt.